

# DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 26 No. 10

October 15, 1958

Whole No. 313

## A Bangup Vacation

by Charlie Duprez

There comes a time me lads when a feller takes a vacation that kinda stands out from any previous one he may have had in the past. This one, from July 14th to Aug. 4th, turned out to be just that kind.

The reason I think some of you fellers would be interested is that a good part of it was in our various visits, by invite of course, to a number of our well known brothers of Ye Happy Hours Brotherhood.

The swell fellows whom I'm sure you would be mighty glad to meet were, with the exception of Eli Messier and Reckless Ralph, members whom heretofore I only knew via correspondence.

They were all located up in the New England states, and of course with lots of time to kill we took in the various spots of interest the grand scenery, especially New Hampshire, the Green Mountains of Vermont and along the coast of Maine. In New Hampshire especially we rode the tram car, built like a bird cage, to the top of Cannon Mountain, and what a thrill that was. The scenery was just wonderful and believe you me, I took many color shots for remembrance. So much for that.

After the 3rd day we landed at the fine home of Eli Messier and his wife Diana. They were hosts supreme. Wouldn't let us spend a dime and even to the point of taking us out to dine in quite a swanky restaurant. Eli, like the others, had plenty of our old thrillers, especially 3 complete sets of the Merriwells which he



Bill Burns with one of his many volumes of Happy Days

was glad to show me. All of the homes around there were of the old American architecture, a relief to our eyes being so used to these modern ones being built all around us here in Smithtown and elsewhere.

On the first day, Eli drove me to visit our Reckless Ralph and I found him bathed in sweat as we all were, and the same good natured kind hearted guy as always.

Three full days with Eli and regretfully we left for Rockland, Me. where good old bully boy Willum Burns awaited us. There also we were well received, and if you never met



Bill you missed seeing a very fine chap. To describe Bill, he's a little fellow lugging around a mustache of sorts, weighs about 104 pounds, when wearing a wet bathing suit and father on the quiet side. Has quite a large home on Cottage Street, just outside of town and very well kept indeed. He is a bit on the lonesome side since his beloved wife died and when we taught him the well known game of rummy, if he didn't want to play from sunrise to long after sundown. With him but on an upper floor resides his daughter and son-in-law. Emery is his name and he sure made a hit with me. He was a bit worried at the time as his daughter had just gone under an operation but later found it all turned out O.K. Good for you Emery. Yes, Bill was real sorry to see us finally pull out for the next port of call.

A day's run up to Bangor which we found just another town and two days later arrived in Gardiner where we could land at any time, the home of Ken Daggett. Ken being a man who did various jobs on order was only home from Friday nights until Monday morning. He wrote telling me he would leave the key and to make ourselves at home. Never having met me, this was quite unusual and appreciated. We arrived on a Wednesday and what a home he had. The more wonderful as he practically rebuilt it all himself into a very mod-

ern structure. All conveniences and you can bet we took full advantage of his hospitality. The original part of the house was built in 1828 or thereabouts, but you'd never know it. For instance in his kitchen he had the largest picture window I ever did see and the view overlooked vast farmland, most of which he owned. Cows grazing in the distance, but these Ken did not own. As the glass for the window was so enormous he had to order that made up special. What a time he must have had putting it in.

When Friday finally arrived, Ken came busting in like a cyclone all excited, but the excitement grew when he spied the roast chicken dinner my wife Claire had prepared for him. For such a tall skinny guy that boy could eat. Had it not been for Claire's fancy stuffing, we would better have had three chickens ready.

The best way I can describe this Ken feller to you is a feller with a continuous smile and bounces around like a two year old. He wouldn't if he had the slipping chest I gathered in recent years. He was what I might term a bit of perpetual motion and was always on the move. His voice was one to do credit to a Grand Opera soprano, and when he wanted to stress a point it often hit high E. Manys the E's he got across within a very short space of time. What a lovable character.

Me thinks that right here I can give

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Ralph F. Cummings, Fisherville, Mass.

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you a bit of his biography which in some respects is like any normal healthy person. It was regrettable however that he was practically deaf and I had to wear out besides myself a few pencils to carry on my side of the conversation. However we got along just fine and I learned how to write without a typewriter.

Something must have slipped because he was born in Belgrade, Maine 1896, being the youngest of four kids and three of them learned all about R. R. station work plus the telegraph. His sister later became telegraph operator for the Western Union Tel. Co., which she held for many years. Ken's dad was a R. R. man and he often helped his dad with the station work on the Maine and Central R. R. Ken then himself took over a station, doing the telegraphing and receiving until the rules became a bit strict in their physical requirements and Ken at an early age developed poor hearing which as time went on grew worse.

Therefore not passing, he had to abandon a R. R. career. So he turned to textiles and worked in the mills. Being unusually mechanically inclined he landed in the weaving rooms where he spent 30 years, winding up as a loom repair man. As the woolen mills started fading out here and there he cut loose and went out on his own doing all sorts of repair work. Plumbing took his fancy, getting a plumbers license and with plenty of study passed with a masters license. That besides the plumbing is carpentry or what have you which he follows today.

He left school when 17, an item I should have mentioned earlier. It was the year 1906 when he started reading our boyhood treasures and his principal enthusiasm was mostly on the Merriwell tales. Gil Patten was to him the greatest writer of all time. He still has the entire set of Tip Tops and many of them were ones he kept since he started. He told me he read them through three times and still revels in one here and there.

Eli Messier had three sets he show-



ed me, but in the thick 15 centers.

What started Ken on novels was reading an ad by our most Reckless Ralph, and from there on in he started a real collection and got acquainted mostly via correspondence with many members of our Brotherhood. Like many of you he walked many miles with novels under his arms swapping with other enthusiasts.

Then he goes on in a lower key how he often went to Camden, Maine, Gil Patten's home town, and passed the mountain on top of which Frank Merriwell had his big struggle with Hartwig the dirty villain with Elsie Bellwood looking on horrified as only Elsie could do. On this mountain (Tip Top No. 115) Frank climbed and in big letters carved his name on the moss ledge. That Frank feller sure got around.

Ken had me fairly dizzy looking at his collection and no more that I figured here's the last, out he came with another load, trying his utmost to please. How can one help loving that guy?

I managed to get away from it all one afternoon when I drove Ken over to Augusta to visit another brother I



had never met, Eddie Smart. Here I met both he and his wife and how nice they were. Eddie was sincerely glad to see me and it wasn't put on, not that lad. He is by trade a printer but has his own little printing shop a few yards from his home and I was sure interested in the old time printing press which still operates as good as new. He works for one of the local newspapers and in his shop does printing as a side line. He also makes rubber stamps. I gave him an order for one but the darn gazabo wouldn't let me pay for it. I am sorry we had so little time but the time we were there was well spent.

Our last and final visit was to Kezar Falls where we found George French, whom I also had never met, but we exchanged letters quite frequently. His winter home is Bloomfield, N. J., but in the summer time he has a home a few miles outside of town and is comfortably situated. He was most cordial. Now in his 70's but still very active doing color photography for the state of Maine and also for the use of his pictures on post cards and calendars. All in color.

We were with George a short while and that wound up the very pleasant visits we had with the Brotherhood.

Two weeks more of traveling hither and yon terminated our wonderful vacation, but to me had it not been for the wonderful reception from our Brotherhood members it would not have been as outstanding.

## THE BAD BOYS PAPER

by W. O. G. Lofts

The strangest title ever given to an English Victorian Boys Weekly was, I would say, without hesitation "The Bad Boys Paper." This was published from October 5, 1889 until March 1, 1890, a total of 21 issues, by the firm of Guy Raynor (S. Dacre Clarke).

This publisher could most certainly claim to have produced more juvenile weeklies, and killed them off in far less time than any other publisher. In the first number the Editor tried

to explain his reason for giving such an extraordinary title to a new Boys venture—though it wasn't very convincing. For the interest of the reader I quote his opening remarks in the Editorial:

"What a strange title! will be the first exclamation of almost every person who sees this Journal "The Bad Boys Paper." How Shocking! But wait a bit, Mr. Critic! Not quite so fast; before you condemn us just take a peep inside. Nowadays it is the fashion to deceive the public by goody-goody titles, and we have resolved to depart from the wicked custom. We are not going to preach, boys, not a bit of it. Our one aim and object is to provide a healthy and entertaining Journal, and we have chosen our new title in preference to any that have been suggested to us. Some of our well-meaning friends have given us an array of head-lines such as "The Boys Instructor" (This would frighten away the average Boy), "The Boys Sunday Journal" (What would boys want with a Sunday Journal), "The Boys Friend" (Namby pamby), "The Boys Best Book" (Great goodness every publisher has been laying claim to the best book for a hundred years or more), etc., etc., and for a time we were in a quandry. What should we do for a title? We wanted something attractive. Our friends claimed that there was no Sunday Journal for Boys, and that in consequence faithful readers perused all sorts of wicked things. This argument decided us to issue a Journal for boys that should not possibly be mistaken for a Sunday School Book, because six days out of seven are quite sufficient for amusement.

Now we flatter ourselves that with such a title our paper cannot be mistaken for a tract, although its contents are far superior to the majority of papers supposed to be fit for a study on the Sabbath Day. What is our programme? Plenty of stirring tales and pictures, and an enormous circulation. That is what we want, and if any person can point out a single paragraph which contains a



wrongful thought or suggestion we will forfeit our right to cater for faith again. Hurrah then for Guy Rayner's "Bad Bays Paper" and let us hope, if it ever should fall into the hands of any bad boy, that he will never again commit any worse action than is found in its pages."

There was quite a lot more written in a similar vein, though I think the above will be sufficient for my purpose.

Actually the "Bad Boys Paper" was not a new paper at all! The previous week it had been called "Boys of the Isles." This had run for 36 weeks, and evidently not proving a success—the publishers decided to make the startling change in the title—and it started at No. 1 again. Guy Raynor had quite a habit of doing that sort of thing with Boys Weeklies.

To be perfectly fair; the new "Bad Boys Paper" was quite a good and reasonable boys weekly, and on a par with others published in the late 1880s. It consisted of 16 pages, priced 1d. of the average size, the paper was of good quality—and the type easily read. The front cover of the first issue showed a scene from the exciting new serial story inside entitled "The Brigands Revenge"—and other serial stories and complete tales were in its contents. There were also several instalments of three serials which had been running in the "Boys of the Isles"—one of particular interest to American readers was "Lion Jack" written by none other than P. T. Barnum—the great showman. To complete all this there were the usual jokes—competitions (with fireworks as prizes—and the amusing mistake of all Editors of new papers, a column of answers to readers—with no explanation as to how they got in the first issue of a new boys paper!

Despite all this, the "Bad Bays Paper" only ran for a total of 21 weeks—and was then replaced by a more orthodox title, "The Boys Graphic" which ran for about a year.

Readers who may be desirous of obtaining a copy of "The Bad Boys Paper" perhaps would like to know

that it is one of the rarest to collect in English circles—apart from no copies being registered at the British Museum—I have only seen one set in my career as a collector, which was in the hands of a well known Englishman. It was from these copies that I was able to make my notes for this article—which gives a little information on the rarest of all English juvenile papers—"The Bad Boys Paper."

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# NEWSY NEWS

By Ralph F. Cummings  
Fisherville, Mass.

If any one wants back numbers of the Dime Novel Roundup before No. 238 let me know.

Ray Mengar wrote that he was sitting in his den, looking over his old timers as he has a number of them framed, and hanging on the walls around the room. I'll bet it's a sight to see. We would all like to be sitting with you, all of us, telling our tales of woe, of collecting the old timers, and what not, wouldn't that be grand, it sure would. Oh, if we only had the wings of an angel, we all could fly out to see each other, and what a whale of a time it would be.

Floyd Beagle wants to get rid of all his odds and ends in various novels and concentrate on Log Cabin Libraries. They are going to be kind of tough getting, but he may be able to get in a few off and on. Floyd says he ran across an old associate of his one day in Troy, N. Y. They were in the old 12th Cavalry together in Fort Sheridan, Wyo., and did they hash things out and over. That was back in 1903 when the cavalry was just doing police work, keeping the Cheyennes and Foxes in their

place. His time was up, and Floyd's outfit was shipped to the Philippines, soon after the Aguinaldo uprising.

The old Fall months are coming very fast, and the cold and snowy weather will be here before we know it.

Mr. & Mrs. Hary Weatherbee were down her from Springhill, N. S., Canada, for the day of August 4th, and we all had a very enjoyable time of it, then they left that evening, and expected to be well on their way down to Brooklyn, N. Y., to visit with Charlie Bragin. Hope they were successful and found him at home.

Aug. 5th I went down to the cape (Cape Cod) to visit my brother and other relations down there, and on the 11th I came back by train, to Boston, and visited with Frank Henry, and after a little while I had him call up John MacDonald over in Somerville, who came after me (Frank warned me to be careful of the wild women over there), so I spent the night with John, and he brought along a bunch of stuff to trade with me when we got here next day. On our way we stoped off in Arlington, and met Mr. and Mrs. Don Learnard and above all, that old down easter, Ken Daggett. He sure was a sight for sore eyes.

## MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

11. John A. Reischmann, Route 1 Box 320A, Valrico, Fla. (New address)
67. Harry A. Weill, 210 West 101st St., Apt. 11-L, New York 25, N. Y. (New address)

I am most anxious to complete my file of "Golden Days." My problem is a little difficult as I insist on having covers and advertising complete when so published.

Vol. 8, Nos. 2, 38, 49. Vol. 9, Nos. 2, 3, 7, 8, 43, 48, 52. Vol. 11, Nos. 16, 20, 22, 25, 27, 32. Vol. 12, No. 1. Vol. 15, Nos. 13 to 52. Vol. 19, Nos. 49, 51. Vol. 20, Nos. 8 to 12, 15, 16, 18, 20-52. Vol. 22, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 13 to 15, 52. Vols. 24, 25, 26 27 will buy these bound or unbound as they were issued without covers. If you can supply any of these, please quote me your price. I am sure we can come to terms.

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